

care and did other things that would weaken our economy and be unfair to the elderly and to working people just above the poverty line.

So I say to people: Where is your idea? Senator Mitchell will tell you, this week when the Senate Finance Committee voted that economic plan out, our opponents on the other side, many of whom ought to be helping us, had all kinds of amendments saying let's cut this tax, let's cut this tax, let's cut this tax. Guess what? How many amendments did they offer to cut spending? Zero. And when they were asked, where are your amendments to cut spending, you know what they said? "We don't want to take any politically unpopular votes on spending cuts." Folks, we are telling you the truth for a change. We are telling you the truth. We had 12 years where people said, "We're going to cut your taxes, and we're going to cut somebody else's spending." And what they did was to increase spending, cut taxes on the wealthiest Americans, have back-door tax increases on the middle class, and let the economy go down the tubes. We can do better. And I need your help and support, and so does George Mitchell, in making sure we do better.

And let me tell you, there is more to do. I want to reemphasize, we are not trying to deal with these tough issues just to reduce the debt. When you reduce the debt, you free up money to invest, to create jobs. You think about it. There are people in this audience today who have refinanced their homes since interest rates started dropping so much last November. That's happening to millions of people all across America, and that frees up money. People are getting lower business loans. People are getting lower consumer loans and lower car loans. And over the next year and a half, it will help this economy. It helps the economy if you invest in giving kids a head start, if you retrain workers, if you

invest in helping companies produce things for the civilian market if they don't have a defense contract anymore. It helps the economy if you do what it takes to compete with our foreign competitors everywhere. That's what helps the economy. And that's what we are committed to doing.

And let me say this: After this budget fight is over, as Senator Mitchell just said, I want us to begin in earnest, and we can do it this year if we'll get after it, to provide the security that will come to millions of Americans if we provide affordable, quality health care to every American family. And we can do that, too.

We can pass the national service bill and open the doors of college education to all. We can pass a welfare reform bill that puts people to work instead of maintains them in dependency. We can change the nature of politics. But you have to stay with us. You have to say: We want the House of Representatives to pass campaign finance reform. We want the House of Representatives to tell us where all the lobbyists are and who they're giving money to. We want the whole Congress to pass an economic plan, and we don't want you to stop.

Change is hard and difficult. And it's not easy to get 218 votes in the House and 51 Senators to agree on anything. They all come from different places with different interests. And my job as President is to try to make sure that the national interest overrides the particular interest of anybody and any group in any State, including yours and mine. We have got to pull this country together again and be a family again so we can move forward again.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. at Deering Oaks Park.

Remarks at the National Sports Awards Reception

June 20, 1993

Good evening and welcome to the White House, and where appropriate, happy Father's Day. I'm glad all of you could be here with us tonight to celebrate the tradition of sport in American life. Hillary and I are delighted

to be the honorary cochairmen of the first annual National Sports Awards and to pay tribute to those outstanding Americans rightly called "the great ones."

Frankly, I'm thrilled to meet these heroes of

sport. And I have to say that of all the perks that have come along with being President of the United States, the best one was being able to play 18 holes of golf with Arnold Palmer this morning. Even if it turned out to be all downhill from here, I could still be on a high. I might say, I'm glad I didn't have to play one on one with Kareem or go 15 rounds with Muhammad Ali to justify the round of golf. [Laughter]

It's been said that the athlete does not embark upon a sport but upon a way of life. Tonight we honor five individuals not simply for their athletic superiority but for the special qualities of character and leadership that have earned them the respect and the admiration of our Nation.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar led every team he ever played for to championships. From Power Memorial High School to UCLA, to the Milwaukee Bucks, to the LA Lakers, he dominated the court for the entire 20 years in the NBA that he played. And he's hailed by many fans and players alike as the greatest center ever to play the game. He led the Los Angeles Lakers to five championships. And his teammates used to call him E.F. Hutton. When Kareem talked, they listened.

When he retired in 1989, he had been a first team all-star 10 times, college player of the year twice, earned 6 world championship rings, 6 MVP trophies, and played more seasons, more games, and more minutes, blocked more shots, and with his elegant trademark "skyhook" scored more points than anybody else who ever played this game. But for all of us who watched him, we know he did something more: He brought a tremendous pride and dignity to a game that will be forever in his debt. And tonight we offer him our highest praise. Congratulations.

Muhammad Ali may be the most widely recognized athlete in the world. He captured the imagination of the world with his distinctive fighting style and with the exhilarating fights he took to places all over the globe. He was the first fighter in history to win the heavyweight title three times. He was a loud, proud poet who told the world he was the greatest and was poetry in motion when he floated around the ring. Sometimes when his opponents couldn't hit him, it was hard to tell whether he was boxing or doing ballet.

He was just as courageous and dignified and mesmerizing a challenger as he was a champion.

And he's a man who has unfailingly stood by his principles and his beliefs. It was written of him that he spoke of God before his fights; he spoke of man; he spoke of hungry children. He cared about the sick and the old. He raised the game to drama. And because he stood for something greater, the people who climbed upon their chairs for him felt that they stood, too, for something greater. Congratulations, Muhammad Ali.

Arnold Palmer revolutionized his sport. It's been said that when television discovered golf, the world discovered Arnold Palmer. Fans all over the world grew to love his unique style, his boldness, and his daring. To many he is the American ideal: the perpetual underdog falling behind and then charging down the stretch and tearing up the golf course. I can identify with that. [Laughter]

Who could forget the 1960 U.S. Open tournament, where before the final round he trailed in 15th place, and a reporter said he was no more in contention than the man operating the hot dog concession. In one of the most memorable examples of grace under pressure, he birdied the first 6 out of 7 holes and then went on to win the tournament. During the campaign, some people used to call me the Comeback Kid, but I think he deserves that title much more than I ever will. He won the U.S. Amateur, the U.S. Open, the Masters 4 times, the British Open twice, was named Athlete of the Decade in 1970. He is a remarkably gifted man. And we are all in his debt.

I must say, I saw today on the golf course that even today when he tees it up, Arnie's Army is as faithful and enthusiastic as when he marched through Augusta to win his first Masters. We thank him tonight for all he has given us, for all the thrills. And I can tell you that on the basis of a wonderful few hours today, he's just as much of a gentleman and a competitor in private as he always seemed to the public. Congratulations, Mr. Palmer.

Wilma Rudolph had to relearn to walk before she could learn to run. The 20th of 22 children, she suffered a childhood bout with polio, double pneumonia, and scarlet fever, which left her legs paralyzed. But with resilient spirit and undaunted determination, she defied all the expectations and beat the odds to become a great athlete. She was a remarkable star at a fairly early age, although she did not take up track until the ripe old age of 13. Two years later,

she won a bronze medal at the 1956 Olympics. She had an extraordinary career at Tennessee State College. She went back to Rome in 1960 and became the first American woman to win three track and field gold medals at one Olympic games. Her trademark composure became familiar to people all over the world. And she became literally an international heroine.

After retiring from track, she continued to dedicate much of her time to working with young athletes. She did more than break world records. She broke barriers for thousands of women competitors and paved the way for those who have followed in her footsteps. Wilma Rudolph, you are a great one.

Our next honoree is not here, but I want you to know a little bit about him. There was a young pitcher new to the major leagues. He was facing a batter by the name of Ted Williams. "Ball three," said the umpire; and the pitcher walked halfway to the plate and screamed, "What was wrong with that pitch?" The umpire dusted off the plate; the young, frustrated pitcher wound up and threw; and once again Ted Williams hit it over the Fenway Park fence. The umpire walked toward the man and said to the rookie, "You see, son, when you throw a strike, you don't have to look to me; Mr. Williams will let you know."

During his 19 seasons with the Boston Red Sox, the Splendid Splinter earned 6 major league batting titles, 2 at the ages of 39 and 40; maintained a batting average of .344, with 2,654 hits, including 521 home runs. These statistics are awesome, all right, but they're even more incredible when you consider that Ted Williams lost most of 5 seasons and hundreds of hits and home runs because he wanted to serve his country. He left baseball twice, first to serve as a fighter pilot in World War II and then to serve again in the Korean war. In 1941, he defied all the laws of baseball when he batted .406. No one has batted .400 since. And talk about grace under pressure, at his very last time at bat in 1960, he hit a farewell home run.

Ted Williams is a great athlete and a great patriot, and I'm proud to honor him tonight, as I know all of you are, for what he's done for his sport and for his country.

Each of you has honored your sport and your Nation and left a legacy of greatness. I hope these National Sports Awards become an American tradition that will honor the legacy of all

those who participate. Today we must look to the future, the idea of service performed by young people all across America.

The funds raised by these awards and this weekend will enable young people dedicated to service to expand their own efforts in rebuilding our more troubled communities, in caring for those unable to care for themselves and transforming the lives of people and cities in need, and in the process, in transforming and improving their own lives.

Some of these young leaders and those who have mentored them into a life of service are here with us. And I urge all of you on the eve of our Nation's summer of service to go forward knowing that you are shining examples of what it means to be a real citizen in our country. You are welcome here, too, tonight. Perhaps there is no way better to honor the athletes tonight than by supporting young people who themselves are dedicated to helping their peers most in need. They are also great ones.

Although we are blessed with the presence of these athletes tonight, we are all, I'm sure, saddened by the absence of another champion, Arthur Ashe, an extraordinary man who lived by the words "thou shalt not close a door behind you." There will be more said about Arthur Ashe tonight at Constitution Hall, but I'm proud that his wife, Jeanne, is here with us tonight. And thank you so much for your presence.

In closing let me just say that I have some people to thank tonight: those who have agreed to serve on the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, including the two cochairs, Florence Griffith Joyner and Tom McMillen, who is standing here and looking short with his friend Bill Bradley as Kareem is up on the platform. They will advise me and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala, on ways to enhance opportunities for all Americans, not just the young, to participate in physical fitness and sports activities.

Finally, let me say to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, to Muhammad Ali, to Arnold Palmer, to Wilma Rudolph, to Ted Williams, and to all of you who are here tonight, I thank you for lending your dignity to this occasion and for your service to this country and for your embodiment of the best values of America.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to tennis champion Arthur Ashe, who died of AIDS; Olympic track champion Florence

Griffith Joyner; and former professional basketball players Tom McMillen and Senator Bill Bradley.

Interview With Michael Jackson of KABC Radio, Los Angeles, California June 21, 1993

Mr. Jackson. Good morning, President Clinton.

The President. Good morning, Michael. It's nice to hear your voice again. And I enjoyed listening to your callers call in.

Economic Program

Mr. Jackson. Oh, I'm so glad you heard them, sir. I know the budget is the burning issue of the moment. You may have seen a Conrad cartoon; it showed you in caricature, and the caption was "Or maybe you'd like Bush back and another \$2 trillion debt." How could we avoid that and make the whole economic climate healthier?

The President. Well, the first thing we have to do is to gain control over our economic destiny again. The deficit is spinning out of control. It was about \$74 billion a year in 1980; it's over \$300 billion this year. The debt, as you know, has gone from \$1 trillion to \$4 trillion. And because of that, the money we ought to be investing hasn't been there. You can see that very clearly in Los Angeles and southern California when you had all these defense cutbacks. We should have been reinvesting all that money in domestic technologies to put the people back to work here at home in high-speed rail, environmental cleanup, all kinds of other things. But the debt was so big that the money went to pay interest on the debt and into exploding health care costs.

So our economic plan is terribly important to the people of the United States and the people of southern California because it begins to give us some control back. Already, the fact that the plan is making progress has brought down long-term interest rates. I know one lady who called you said her husband was in construction. Because we are at 20-year mortgage rates lows, there have been 130,000 new jobs come into this economy in construction in the last 4 months. That's the biggest increase in 9 years. Now, it's going to take a while to reach southern California, because that's one of the

most distressed areas of our national economy. But it is beginning to turn around.

So you've got to bring the deficit down. You've got to do it in a way that is fair to the middle class, by making upper income people pay the lion's share of the burden. There have to be some incentives in this plan to grow new jobs in the private sector through empowerment zones in our cities and poor rural areas, through new incentives to small business. And there also have to be some targeted investments. Over the next 5 years, we still need to spend some money to try to redevelop the businesses, the communities, and retrain the workers that have been hurt so badly by defense cutbacks.

So this is a good plan, and it's still the only real plan on the table. A lot of people have criticized it, but it's hard to quarrel with the results of it. Just the progress of the plan is bringing down long-term interest rates. We've got three-quarters of a million new jobs in the economy since January 20th, and I am encouraged. We've got a long, long way to go, and we're dealing with some economic trends that have been in place for 20 years in the world economy. But we can turn it around if we will do so with discipline and if we'll stop the delay, if we'll go forward now and pass the plan.

Mr. Jackson. Mr. President, you mentioned critics. Congressman Henry Hyde, speaking for the Republicans, claimed over the weekend that the Senate Democrats are going to agree to a tax-and-spend, tax-and-spend program this summer that will result in another version of the biggest tax hike in history. In a nutshell, by year's end, will the rich be taxed considerably more, heavily taxed? Will the middle class be further hit?

The President. By year's end, if the plan passes, upper income taxes will go up, taxes on the upper 6 percent of the American people; two-thirds of the tax burden would be paid for by people with incomes above \$200,000. The